THE STATE Preferable to the CHURCH; OR, REASONS

For making Sale of the whole present *Property* of the *Church*, in *England* and *Ireland*, for the Use of the *State*; and for rendering the *Clergy* more equal among themselves, less vexatious and onerous to the *Laity*, and more dependent on their HEAD, by subjecting them to the Exchequer for their Stipends, as practiſed in *Holland*.

With a View of the Self-denying Conduct of the Popiſh Clergy, in Exigencies of the State, and particularly of our own, under PHILIP and MARY, in their releaſing, for ever, all Claim to the *Poſſeſſions* that had been taken from the Church.

In a LETTER from a COUNTRY GENTLEMAN to the REPRESENTATIVE of his COUNTY in PARLIAMENT.

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

THE STATE Preferable to the CHURCH, &c.

SIR,

WHEN the Demands of the Crown rise above the ordinary Strength of the Community, and continues so to do for a Series of Years, 'tis natural, for those weighed down by the Excess of their Load, to inquire whether they might not have been less burthened, if due and early Regard had been had to easing the most useful and industrious Part of the People at the Expence of the least necessary, tho' not the least luxurious and idle? The Research would well become a Free-born *Englishman* at any time, but at present, when an Increase of the Taxes is expected, and the People are ready to sink under those already imposed, it becomes not only eligible but necessary. I shall therefore, Sir, without further Apology lay my Thoughts before you, that represent my Country in Parliament, on the Means which, I think, ought to be put in Use at present, and should have been practised earlier, for relieving an oppressed Nation.

If the Modellers of the late glorious Revolution could have foreſeen that their Country would have been harraſs'd by three general expenſive Wars, in little more than half a Century, in Conſequence of that neceſſary Meaſure, we are not to doubt but they would have laid ſuch a Foundation as might enable the Crown to maintain ſuch Conteſts without over-clogging Trade and Induſtry, thoſe genuine Sources of the Wealth and Power of their Country. But ſuppoſing the firſt Revolutioners could have divined what was to happen, you will ask me, where could they have found Materials for laying the Foundation I contend for? To which I anſwer with that Freedom and Candour ſo natural to a *Briton*, and Proteſtant, In The Church. Yes, Sir, *in the Church*, where they may be eaſieſt found and beſt ſpared.

I am neither aſhamed or afraid to own my Opinion with regard to Church and Clergy. I think the latter no better or more uſeful or Painstaking than their Brethren in *Scotland* and *Holland*, and the former, to remain the Spouſe of the firſt Founder, need not be decked out with ſo great Pomp and Pageantry. In the firſt and pureſt Ages of Chriſtianity, we read of no Pomp in Churchmen. They laboured in the Vineyard more to edify and inſtruct than to raiſe in Title and accumulate Wealth. And if our firſt Reformers had been at Liberty to purſue their own Plan, 'tis probable, we ſhould have ſeen leſs Pomp and Pride, and more Godlineſs and Humility in the Clergy of our National Church; but Queen *Elizabeth*, great and judi-

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cious in the Groſs of her Conduct, had too ſtrong a Bias to ſpiritual Pageantry, for them to ſtem.

Yet, that which could not be effected at the Beginning of the Reformation, might have been compaſſed at the Revolution. And it has been a Matter of Admiration to many, that the Reformers of the Conſtitution, at that time, ſhould omit reforming thoſe who ſtood moſt in need of a Reformation. I don't mean ſo much a bare Reformation of Manners or Diſcipline, which the Clergy then, and ſince, ſtood perhaps no leſs in need of than others, as one with regard to the Property they enjoyed in the State on Account of their Function.

But this Omiſſion was not the only Miſtake of thoſe Days, tho' not of the leaſt Importance. For had the Church then been put intirely in the Power of the State, as in the *United Provinces*, or even as in *Scotland*, we ſhould have had greater Harmony at Home, and very probably no leſs Succeſs abroad, without ſo great a Weight of Debts and Taxes as we groan under at preſent.

The Revenues of the Church in *England* and in *Ireland*, where I would have the Reformation I contend for alſo take Place, are far more conſiderable than is conſiſtent with the Purity of the reformed Religion; and for this Reaſon, if there were no other, every Orthodox Member of our Church ſhould wiſh for, and concur, in eſtaliſhing ſuch an Equality among Churchmen as would render them more Uſeful, and leſs Arrogant and Domineering, than ſome have been.

But

But to this ſpiritual Motive may be added one no leſs Cogent, tho' ſimply Temporal; and that is, the Eaſe of the Laity, who are the Support and Strength of the State. Is it not a Reproach to the Underſtanding of *Engliſhmen*, that ſo vaſt a Proportion of their Property ſhould be left in the idleſt Hands in the Nation? Is it not a Reproach to the Reformation, that all the Pomp of Popery ſhould be retained by our Clergy in their Equipages, Houſes, and Tables, while we baniſh it from the Inſide of our Churches. Is it not Ridiculous, that we ſhould pay ſo extravagantly for what coſts ſo little in other Proteſtant Countries? And is it not a ſhameful Reproach to our Clergy, that they do leſs for a great Deal, than others do for a little? To prove this, I ſhall preſent you with the Portrait of the Clergy in *Holland*, as drawn by an impartial Pen.

The Office of Miniſter, or Paſtor, is the moſt Arduous and leaſt Lucrative in the whole Extent of the United Provinces. They are obliged to preach twice or three Times a Week, beſides catechiſing Youth and performing other Paſtoral Functions, ſuch as aſſiſting Criminals, viſiting the Sick, and exhorting and confirming the Flock in pious Diſpoſitions, particularly at the ſtated Seaſons of Communion, which is four times in the Year;" ----And for this ſo painful a Miniſtry how are they rewarded in this World; as for the next, 'tis to be hoped, they may be on the Level at leaſt with their more idle, richer, and more luxurious Brethren on this Side of the Water? *The Stipend of the moſt celebrated Paſtors, ſays the ſame candid Author, in the moſt conſiderable Towns, ſuch as* Amſterdam, *the* Hague, &c. *exceeds*

exceeds not 2000 *Guilders a Year, (about* 200 *l. Sterling) and in the leſſer Towns and Country Cures, ſeldom above half that Sum, and often leſs.*

Now, Sir, to compare the paſſive Conduct of our Paſtors with that of the more active Miniſtry in *Holland*, how ſhall we be able to account, *in foro Conſcientiæ*, for the indulging our Spiritual D——s in Pluralities, Commendams, Prebendaries, and a thouſand other exorbitant *Et Ceteras*, conducive in no Light to the ſpiritual Emolument of the Flock, or the temporal Benefit of the State? Are our People, who are guided by a Clergy enjoying the Tenth Part of their Labour, better Proteſtants or Chriſtians than the *Dutch*, whoſe Spiritual Guides are fed only with ſuch Crumbs as fall from the Benevolence of the State? But hence proceeds the paſtoral Aſſiduity and general good Conduct of the *Dutch* Clergy; they are paid by the State, who, keeping a watchful Eye over them, pays or ſtops their Stipends in Proportion to the Regularity or Irregularity of their Conduct. If a *Dutch* Paſtor neglects the Duties of his Function, preaches unſound Doctrine, meddles in the Policy of the State, preſumes to arraign the Conduct of the Magiſtrate, or gives Scandal by any Irregularities of Life, he is ſure to find the Exchequer ſhut againſt him, and ſo to continue till he gives Proof of his Conformity to the Intentions of the Civil Magiſtracy.

But is not ſuch Policy founded on the pureſt Proteſtant Principles which puts the Civil Magiſtracy above the Church where-ever the Reformation has ſucceeded to Popery? As our Prince here in *England* is Head of our Church, ſo are the

the States General in the *United Provinces*, and ſo is his *Poliſh* Majeſty in *Saxony*, tho' of late a Papiſt. Well then may the Civil Magiſtracy that is the Chief or Head of the Church, be allowed on the Principles of the Reformation, to inſpect the Conduct and reſtrain any Exceſs obſervable in the Practice of Churchmen. But this reaſonable and neceſſary Power thus veſted, or rather acknowledged, in the Civil Magiſtracy by the Reformation, can never anſwer thoſe ſalutary Ends propoſed by the firſt pious Reformers, while Churchmen enjoy ſeparate and diſtinct Properties in the State. Therefore the *Dutch* very wiſely made their Clergy wholly Dependent on their viſible Head on Earth, the Civil Magiſtrate. They would not have acted up to the Spirit of the Reformation had they done otherwiſe. For take away *private Judgment* and the *Supremacy* of the Civil Magiſtracy from Proteſtants, and our holy Reformation will dwindle to a Shadow.

Thus, on the fundamental and pureſt principles of the Reformation, have the *Dutch* acted not only prudently but piouſly, in rendering their Clergy dependent on the State for their Temporalities. Thus, at once, have they cut away the Root of Animoſity between the Paſtor and his Flock, and of all Litigation on account of Tithes and other paſtoral Demands which ſo amply, here in *England*, employ the Practicers in our Court of *Exchequer*, too often to the Reproach and Scandal of litigious Churchmen.

Sir *William Temple*'s Obſervation, of the Good and Evil ariſing from Religion in *Holland*, is extremely juſt, and will be equally ſo wherever the Clergy

Clergy ſubſiſt ſolely by the Munificence of the State. *Religion*, ſays that great Man, *May be the Means of more good in other Countries, but, ſure I am, there is none where it is productive of leſs Evil.* There is a certain Bias to Dominion in moſt Churchmen, which the Civil Magiſtrate cannot too cautiouſly guard againſt; and ſorry I am to be able to ſay, that they are too often actuated by the Spirit of Litigiouſneſs and Vexation ſo condemnable in it ſelf, and ſo repugnant to Charity and the divine Precepts of the Goſpel.

I readily agree, and am highly pleaſed, that I can ſay, we have Churchmen among us who do not enter into Orders purely for Preferment and Conveniency, and others who think it a Duty to be upon good Terms with their reſpective Flocks. But, Sir, how few of theſe do we know in our Neighbourhood? And if I be not miſinformed, which I wiſh I may, our County expends not more in Litigations between Paſtor and Flock, or abounds more in Feud and Animoſity than any other in the Kingdom. Why are the Clergy in general fallen of late into ſo great Contempt among even our common People, who in all Countries are moſt prone to venerate the Prieſthood? Why, but from the Diſſoluteneſs, the Luxury, the Indolence and Ignorance of ſome, and the Pride, Sordidneſs, Harſhneſs, Haughtineſs and Litigiouſneſs of others?

I own my ſelf the faſt and warm Friend of the *Prieſthood*, but the avowed open Enemy of *Prieſt-craft*. I love the Mother-Church, but am not blind to the Blemiſhes of her Teachers. I reſpect

ſpect a pious, humble, charitable, diſintereſted, painſtaking Clergyman, whoſe ſecondary Views only are directed to his own private Intereſt and Eaſe, as much as I contemn a worldly, haughty, imperious, covetous, litigious, idle Paſtor, who conſiders his Cure as a Leaſe-hold for Life, of which he is to make the moſt, and his Pariſhioners as a Flock, he is to ſhear as often as he can.

How many there are among us of theſe latter I leave to the Judgment of the Publick, to explore the Means by which Harmony may be reſtored and continued between Clergy and People; the Means by which the accidental Errors and Miſtakes of Churchmen may be prevented for the future, and the Means likewiſe by which the War may be ſupported without burthening the more uſeful Part of the Community, or clogging Trade and Induſtry with new or greater Impoſitions.

You will naturally gueſs that my Scheme tends to veſting the whole preſent Property of the Church in *England* and *Ireland* in the Crown, not to enrich or add to its Power, but as a Truſtee for the People, who ſhould be always uppermoſt in the Conſideration of all true Lovers of their Country. As for *Scotland*, tho' *Religion may be more liable to produce Evil than in Holland*, to uſe Sir *William Temple*'s Words, and that the Church there is not ſo dependent, yet as the Livings are moderate and pretty equally diſtributed, I ſhould be of Opinion to let matters remain there as they had been modelled at the Revolution.

The *Scots*, wiſer than we were in the *South* of

of the Iſland, laid hold of that happy Turn in Publick Affairs, to inſiſt on a *Modification*, as eſtabliſhed among their Clergy with regard to Livings. But we, who bore all the Heat of the Day, who bore all the Expence of the Prince of *Orange*'s glorious Expedition, were too much in Love with the Pageantry and Pomp of Popery, tho' we were at ſo great Pains and ſo immenſe an Expenſe to keep it from us; we, I ſay, at that time of new modelling our Conſtitution, never took Example by our wiſer Brethren of *Scotland* to model our Church Affairs, tho' of all others the moſt neceſſary, it may be ſaid the moſt uſeful not only to the People but the Clergy themſelves. For if future Happineſs be that which Churchmen have chiefly in View, which in Charity we are to ſuppoſe, they would be in a much ſhorter Road to it, by being ſupported Quarterly from the Exchequer, than by living all their Lives in a continual Round of Jangling and Conteſt with Pariſhioners.

In *Holland*, Paſtors are paid by the State, in *Scotland*, by the Owners of Lands in the Country, and by the Corporations in Towns and Cities. The Landlord defrays all the Expence of the Tenant, who has nothing to do with the Miniſter even on Account of Marriages and Chriſt'nings. And thus far are the Commonality in *Scotland* on the Level with their Proteſtant Brethren of the *United Provinces*: And as to Emolument, the *Dutch* and *Scotch* Paſtors are much in the ſame Circumſtances. The higheſt Living in *Scotland* does not exceed 150 *l.* Sterling, nor the loweſt fall ſhort of 50 *l.* beſides

ſides Parſonages Dwellings, and ſome ſmall Portion of Glebe Land in the Country. From what has been ſaid of the Stipends in *Holland*, you will have obſerved the Parity.

It may be ſaid, that there being no Dignitaries in *Scotland*, the Hardſhip was not ſo flagrant as it would be here in *England*, ſhould the Stipends of our Clergy be reduced and levelled. They had their Prelates heretofore as well as other Nations, and very likely would have retained them if they had been thought eſſential to Religion. But ſuppoſe Biſhops had been deemed eſſential by the *Scots*, might not they have kept them without ſuppoſing that Epiſcopal Pomp was neceſſary to Chriſtianity?

To be ſerious, is it eſſentially neceſſary that Biſhops ſhould have three, four, five, ſix, ſeven, eight, nine and ten thouſand Pounds a Year? Is it neceſſary that an Archbiſhop ſhould die worth 90,000, *l.* beſides providing very honourably for his Family in Conſequence of his Power and Influence? Is it neceſſary that one Churchman ſhall enjoy a String of Benefices, while Numbers have none and ſtarve?

I am willing to ſuppoſe Epiſcopacy an eſſential Branch of the Chriſtian Syſtem; and therefore hold the order in all the Veneration due to it. But I cannot bring myſelf to think that the *Holy Ghoſt* delights more to abode with them in Coaches and Palaces, and in Parliament, than if they had abided by the Primitive, ſimple way of living practiſed and inculcated by the Apoſtles. I am no leſs willing, that our Prelates retain

tain their Seats in Parliament, if it ſhall be thought that they have been always heretofore inſpired by the Spirit of Truth and Righteouſneſs in their legiſlative Capacity. But admitting, as I do very willingly, that our good Lords the Biſhops add a Luſtre to the upper Houſe, will they ſhine the leſs there for being placed more on the Level with each other than they are at preſent? The pooreſt of them can afford clean *Lawn* Sleeves in their preſent Situation; and if the two Metropolitans ſhould be levelled to an annual Stipend of 1500 *l.* each, and their reſpective Suffragans to 1000 *l.* I don't ſee but they might keep a Coach in Parliament time, notwithſtanding the Duty on Carriage Wheels, provided they reſide with their Flocks the reſt of the Year.

Is it neceſſary that the Biſhopricks and other Church-Livings of *Ireland*, a cheap and plentiful Country, ſhould exceed even thoſe in *England*? Or is it neceſſary, that in the North of that Kingdom, where there are ſcarce ten Proteſtants of the Epiſcopal Church in a whole Pariſh, many of the Incumbents ſhould poſſeſs Livings of four, ſix and eight hundred Pounds a Year? It is no uncommon Sight in that Country, to ſee a Parſon preach, I ſhould ſay read Prayers, Preaching being diſuſed, to his Clerk and ſuch of his own Family as had accompanied him from the Parſonage-Houſe in his Coach and four.

Tho' the Value of Livings in that Kingdom be well known to our Clergy, who are never wanting to themſelves in puſhing their way thither,

ther, where they baſk in Plenty and Eaſe, it would ſeem as if our Stateſmen had acquired none or very little Knowledge of the Treaſure that might be raiſed there by Sale of the preſent Poſſeſſions of the Church. To mention but the Primacy there, it would ſell, at twenty Years Purchaſe only, for above 200,000 *l.* no contemptible Aid to a bleeding Country obliged to raiſe above *Ten Millions* annually, tho' already near *Fourſcore* in Debt.

From this Specimen may be ſeen how greatly the trading and induſtrious Part of the People, that is, the *Laity*, might be eaſed if the Revenues of the Church, Tithes and all, were put to Sale, and the Purchaſe Money applied to the Uſes of the Publick. And ſurely, in a Time of ſuch Danger and Difficulty as the preſent, no good Subject can warrant oppoſing the carrying ſo ſalutary a Scheme into Execution? 'Tis probable our open Foreign, and Native ſecret Enemies might oppoſe ſuch a healing Scheme; but, except the *French* and *Spaniards* Abroad, and our Popiſh Fellow-Subjects at Home, I cannot perſuade myſelf that it would meet with the leaſt Oppoſition. Our Proteſtant Laity would unanimouſly aſſent to it, and as for the Clergy, if their Suffrages were taken collectively, I will anſwer for it, the Majority would be with me.

The poor Clergy! my Heart has often bled for many of them, Men of Learning and Probity, that had ſweated and ſtarved on a Curacy of *Thirty Pounds* a Year, while the Incumbent indolently rioted on three or *four hundred*. But by

by my Scheme Churchmen would be in the Condition allotted for them by Reaſon and the Goſpel. They ſhould have a Sufficiency as in *Holland* and *Scotland*, but ſhould be ſhut out from that Pomp and Superfluity which have brought juſt Scandal on the *Romiſh* Clergy.

'Tis Pity, when we were reforming the Errors of the Church of *Rome*, we took not in that *Superfluity* ſo juſtly complained of by even the Papiſts themſelves, and which has been productive of ſo great Diſſoluteneſs and Exceſs in Churchmen. I wiſh I could ſay that *Superfluity* had not likewiſe been productive of Evil ſometimes, even among the ſpiritual Sons of the Reformation.

But by my reforming Scheme all Objections, as to *Superfluity*, would be removed; and as *Competency* and *Equality* are ſome of the Props that ſupport it, I ſhould not doubt of the Concurrence of the Majority of the Clergy themſelves, who, as Matters ſtand at preſent, are unacquainted with either.

There was a time when the Church had neither *Tithes* or Lands; and the Clergy themſelves won't deny that the Church was pureſt in thoſe early Days of *Competency* and *Equality*. I hope there are none of our reformed Clergy ſo popiſhly inclined, as to think that *Tithes* are of divine Right; he, who, by the *Moſaic* Law, would introduce *Tithes* into the Chriſtian Syſtem, introduces likewiſe a *Sacrifice* and an *Altar*, without which, *Tithes*, by the Law, were unſanctified and poluted.

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This is so true, that the *Jews*, ever since their Temple was destroyed, tho' they have Rabbies and Teachers of the Law, yet pay no *Tithes*, as having no proper *Levites* to whom, nor *Altars* whereupon, to hallow them; which shews, that these People themselves never looked on *Tithes* as Moral, and but purely Ceremonial.

All the Protestant Divines of Europe, except some few of our Established Church in the last Century, deny the Law of *Tithes* to be in force under the Gospel. And they built their Opinion on this, that tho' Hire to the Labourer be of moral and perpetual Right, yet that special kind of Hire, the *Tenth*, can be of no Right or Necessity but to the special Labour for which God ordained it. But that special Labour was the Levitical and ceremonial Service of the Tabernacle, which being abolished, the Right therefore of the special Hire must be abolished likewise.

The Recompence to be given to Ministers, is differently ordained by God, according to the Differences he has put between his two great Dispensations, the Law and the Gospel; under the Law he gave them *Tithes*, under the Gospel, having left all Things in his Church to Charity and Christian Freedom, he has given them only what shall be given freely and in Charity. But I am not for keeping our Clergy altogether to the hard Meat of the Gospel, intending they shall all have a *Competency* from the State, in Exchange for their present unequal Revenues.

That Tithes are of human Invention is evident

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to me, becauſe for the firſt three hundred Years after Chriſt, no Mention is made, in all Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, of any ſuch thing as *Tithes*. Churchmen lived, in thoſe purer Days, on Free-will-Offerings; nor could the Defect of paying *Tithes* be owing to the want of a civil Magiſtracy to injoin it, ſince Chriſtians, having Lands, might have given out of them what they pleaſed.

As a Proof that *Tithes* were introduced by the Craft of the Clergy of the weſtern Church, long after Chriſt, we find no Traces of them among the *Eaſtern* Churches, even to this Day; tho' they have had from the earlieſt Days, both *Sacrifice* and *Altars* as the *Latin* Church. The *Greek* Church, wherever diffuſed, knows nothing of a right Divine to ſtrip the induſtrious Poor of a *Tenth* Part of their Labour. And in the preſent wide *Ruſſian* Empire, where the Clergy are ſaid to Lord it over the Underſtanding of the Laity as much, or more than in Countries where the *Latin* Church prevails; there, I ſay, are no *Tithes* paid or exacted: An irrefragable Proof that the *Greek* Church looks not upon them as enjoined by the Goſpel.

But have we not many Inſtances where even the *Latin* Church has diſpenſed with the Obligation of *Tithes?* Nor were there a few in this our own Country, long before the holy Reformation was thought of, which evidently ſhews that the Church of *Rome*, how tenacious ſoever in Matters of Popery, has a power to part with it occaſionally. A flagrant and happy Inſtance we have of this Complection in the Reign of Queen *Mary* when our Clergy in Convocation addreſſed

Philip and *Mary* to intercede with Cardinal *Pool* Legate *à Latere* from the Pope, not to inſiſt on the Reſtoration of Church-Lands. A glorious Inſtance of the Diſintereſtedneſs of the Clergy of thoſe Times, and no unſeaſonable Leſſon to thoſe of our preſent purer Proteſtant Church, for whom, that they may be incited to follow ſo good Example the firſt time the Convocation is permitted to ſit, I will be at the Pains of tranſcribing here an Addreſs which does ſo much Honour to Churchmen in general, and the rather that it laid the Foundation of that firm Security which we have for our Poſſeſſion of ſuch Church and *Abbey-Lands*, as had been ſeized upon and alienated in the Reigns of *Henry* VIII. and *Edward* VI.

WE the Biſhops and Clergy of the Province of Canterbury, *aſſembled in Convocation, during the ſitting of this Parliament according to ancient Cuſtom, with all due Reverence and Humility do make known to your Majeſties, that tho' we are appointed to take upon us the Care and Charge of all thoſe Churches in which we are placed, as Biſhops, Deans, Arch-Deacons, Prieſts or Vicars; as alſo of the Souls therein committed to us, together with all* Goods, Rights, Privileges, *thereunto belonging, according to the true Intent and Meaning of the Canons made in that Behalf: And that in this reſpect we are bound to uſe all lawful Means for the Recovery of thoſe Goods, Rights, Privileges and Juriſdictions which have been loſt in the late deſperate and pernicious Schiſm, and to regain the ſame unto the Church as in her firſt and right Eſtate: Yet notwithſtanding, having took mature Deliberation of the whole Matter amongſt*

amongſt ourſelves, we cannot but ingenuouſly confeſs, that we know well how difficult a thing (if not impoſſible) it is to recover the ſaid Goods unto their Churches in regard of the manifold unavoidable Contracts, Sales, and Alienations which have been made about the ſame: And that if any ſuch thing ſhould be attempted, it would not only redound to the Diſturbance of the publick Peace; but be a Means that the Unity of the Catholick Church, which by the Goodneſs of your Majeſties hath been ſo happily begun, could not obtain its deſired Effect without very great Difficulty: Wherefore, preferring the Publick Good and Quiet of the Kingdom before our own private Intereſt, and the Salvation of ſo many Souls redeemed with the precious Blood of Chriſt, before any earthly things whatſoever, and not ſeeking our own but the things of JESUS CHRIST, we do moſt earneſtly and moſt humbly beſeech your Majeſties, that you would graciouſly vouchſafe to intercede in our Behalf with the moſt Reverend Father in God, the Lord Cardinal Pool, Legate à Latere from his Holineſs, that he would pleaſe to ſettle and confirm the ſaid Goods of the Church either in Whole or in Part (as he thinks moſt fit) on the preſent Occupants thereof, according to the Power and Faculties committed to him. Thereby preferring the Publick Good before the Private, the Peace and Tranquillity of the Realm before Suits and Troubles, and the Salvation of Souls before earthly Treaſure. And for our Parts, we do, both now and for all Times coming, conſent to all and every thing which, by the ſaid Lord Legate, ſhall in this Caſe, be finally ordained and concluded on: Humbly beſeeching your Majeſties to perſuade the Lord Cardinal,

dinal, nor to be too ſtrict and difficult in the Buſineſs, &c.

You will obſerve in this Addreſs the *Motives* which induced the Convocation to Petition ſo earneſtly and ſincerely for a Confirmation of the Alienation of their Property; they were nothing leſs than *the Peace and Tranquillity of the Realm and the Salvation of Souls, not ſeeking*, ſaid they, *earthly things nor things of our own, but the things of* JESUS CHRIST. What Pity that ſo diſintereſted a Clergy ſhould not have been illuminated with the purer Light of the Reformation! And how unjuſt ſhould we be to doubt that our reformed Clergy will addreſs for a Completion of my Scheme as ſoon as they ſhall be in a Capacity of approaching the Throne collectively? Shall a Popiſh Clergy exceed the Reformed in Acts of Generoſity and Self-denial? Let it not be ſaid that ſo indeleble a Reproach be fixt on the purer choſen Sons of the Reformation.

The Motives to the Generoſity of the Popiſh Clergy were very little, if at all, more cogent than thoſe which ſhould induce our reformed Churchmen to come to the Aid of their ſinking Country. As to Value, the Advantage will be found on the Side of the Petitioners to *Philip* and *Mary*, the Poſſeſſions they had loſt being infinitely more valuable than thoſe I would propoſe to take from the preſent Clergy: And as for the Peace and Tranquillity of the People, I am not ſure but it would be as much reſtored now

now by the Execution of my Scheme, as it could have been in thoſe popiſh Days, by the Confirmation of Church-Lands. For there is no deſcribing the Heart-Burnings of our inferior People on Account of Tithes and the other Dues and vexatious Exactions of the Clergy throughout all the Counties of the Kingdom.

Let it not be urged, that our Clergy have not a Power to part with their property, ſince their popiſh Anceſtors, no leſs skilled in the Canons and Church Conſtitutions, have ſet them the Example in a manner the moſt Solemn that could be, and on an Occaſion the moſt extraordinary and important.

There could not well be an Occaſion more intereſting to this Nation than that whereon an ample and general Releaſe was paſſed, by the whole Clergy of the Kingdom to the Poſſeſſors of Church-Lands. It is in virtue of that Releaſe, the Pope's Confirmation of it in the Perſon of Cardinal *Pool* his Legat, and of the Act of Parliament paſſed at the time of the Releaſe, that our popiſh Anceſtors held Church-lands without Scruple of Conſcience, and that we ſhould at this Time, if the Reformation had not ſucceeded, look upon the Poſſeſſion of them as warranted by all Authority Human and Divine.

The Authority of Parliament, than which we Proteſtants neither do nor wiſh to go higher, we ſhould, if we had remained Papiſts, call Human, and that of the See of *Rome*, we ſhould deem Divine; and both theſe, that Ceſſion of the Clergy had to render it valid and permanent. As I have

inſerted the Act of Ceſſion, let me add, that of the Confirmation too, to ſhew, that even in thoſe Days of Bigotry, the poſſeſſions of the Church were transferred without Murmur or Complaint on the Side of the Looſers, or Scruple or Remorſe on the Part of the Gainers.

But need it be doubted, after this Inſtance of the generous Reſignation of an *Engliſh* Clergy in times of Popery and Idolatry, that our Clergy of the eſtabliſhed Church, the choſen Prieſthood of the Reformation and of Heaven, will part with a portion of their property to the State, in its Exiſtency, without Complaint, or that Buyers will be found as unfeeling of Remorſe as their popiſh Anceſtors.

Cardinal *Pool*'s Diſpenſation, after a Recital of what had been acted uncanonically in the two proceeding Reigns, and of the purport of the Act of Parliament paſſed in Conformity to the Addreſs of the Convocation, goes on, ſaying,— *That as to eccleſiaſtical Goods, they were ſeized and poſſeſſed by divers Perſons of the Kingdom, which, tho' by the Conſtitutions of the Canons they might be declared void, yet if they ſhould be revoked into any other State than in which they then were, the publick Peace and Quiet of the whole Kingdom would be diſturbed, and the greateſt confuſion would follow; eſpecially if the poſſeſſors of the ſame Goods ſhould be moleſted: Therefore, the Parliament have humbly ſupplicated their Majeſties, that they would vouchſafe to intercede with the Cardinal. And whereas the Biſhop and the Clergy of the Province of* Canterbury, *repreſenting almoſt the whole Body of the Eccleſiaſticks of the*

the Kingdom, to whom the Cauſe of thoſe eccleſiaſtick Goods do moſtly appertain, have declared, that theſe Goods cannot be recalled to the Right of the Church, but the univerſal peace and quiet of the Kingdom will be diſturbed, and the cauſe of Faith and the Unity of the Church, now by the conſent of all introduced into the Kingdom, ſhall be brought into extreme Danger, and have ſupplicated, &c.

Therefore we, who are ſent Legat de Lateræ *to your Majeſties, and this moſt noble Kingdom, from our moſt holy Lord* Julius III. *his and the apoſtolick See, that we might reconcile the Kingdom (which hath ſo long been ſeparated from the Unity of the Catholick-church) to God and the Church of Chriſt, and to his Vicar upon Earth, and ſhould with all Study procure all thoſe Things which appertain to the Peace and Tranquility of the Kingdom.*

After by the Benignity of God, and the piety of your Majeſties, by the Authority of our moſt holy Lord the Pope, whoſe Perſon we here repreſent, the Reconciliation is made.

That we may take care for the Peace and Tranquility of the ſaid Kingdom, and the Unity of the Church, from whence the Salvation of ſo many Souls, redeemed by the precious Blood of Chriſt depends, now introduced into this Kingdom, may be ſtrengthened and remain ſafe.

And whereas the Stability of either of them, conſiſts moſtly in that no Moleſtation be brought upon the poſſeſſors of eccleſiaſtical Goods, whereby they may not retain them, which ſo many and ſuch grave Teſtimonies cauſe us to believe; and the

In-

Interceſſion of your Majeſties (who have ſo ſtudiouſly and holily laboured for reſtoring the Unity of the Church and the Authority of the apoſtollick See) may have that Authority with us that is fit, and the whole Kingdom may know and in Truth and Reality experience the motherly Indulgence of the apoſtolick See towards it. Abſolving and judging to be abſolved every one to whom theſe Writings may appertain, from all Excommunications, Suſpenſions, Interdicts, and other eccleſiaſtical Sentences, Cenſures, and Puniſhments, by Law or by Man, upon any Occaſion or Cauſe whatſoever pronounced (if for the Cauſes aforeſaid only they be inflicted.)----And after a Repetition of the Supplications made to him, he adds----

And to whatever Perſon of this Kingdom, to whoſe Hands eccleſiaſtical Goods, by whatever Contract, either lucrative or onoroſe they have come, or they have held or do hold them, and all the Fruits, *tho' unduly received of them, in the whole, he doth remit and releaſe, willing and decreeing, that the Poſſeſſors aforeſaid of the ſaid eccleſiaſtical Goods,* moveable *and* immoveable, *may not at preſent or for the future, by the Diſpoſitions of general or provincial Councils, or the decretal Epiſtles of* Roman *Biſhops, or any other eccleſiaſtick Cenſure be moleſted, diſquieted or diſturbed in the ſaid Goods or the poſſeſſion of them, nor that any eccleſiaſtick Cenſures or Puniſhment be impoſed or inflicted for the Detention and Non-reſtitution of the ſame; and ſo by all kind of Judges and Auditors, it ought to be adjudged and defined, taking from them all kind of Faculty and Authority of judging otherwiſe, and decreeing it to be null and void if any thing happen to be attempted*

attempted to the contrary; notwithſtanding the foreſaid Defects or whatever apoſtolick ſpecial or general Conſtitutions and Ordinances publiſhed in provincial and ſynodal Councils to the contrary.

Thus were our Popiſh Anceſtors quieted, by a Power which they looked upon the higheſt on Earth, both as to their Conſciences and Poſſeſſions. They owned the full Extent of their Power of the See of *Rome*, which Papiſts will ever own it being eſſential to their Faith, and ſaw that extenſive Power veſted in the higheſt Amplitude in the Cardinal Legat, who in Virtue of the Plenitude of his Power pronounced the Abſolution and Remiſſion. *Per autoritatem ſacratiſſimi Domini noſtri Papæ cujus vices ſuſtinemus*, are the Words of the Abſolution. And tho' we of the preſent Age would ſit down contented with a ſingle clauſe in the Act of Parliament on the like Occaſion, we are not however to wonder at the caution of our Popiſh Anceſtors, who had ſo lately acquired thoſe Abbey-Lands and were conſequently the more eminently in Fear of a Reſumption. And for my own part, whoſe whole Eſtate is Church-land, I look upon myſelf to be ſo ſignally indebted to the cautious care of my Anceſtors in thoſe Days of Zeal and Bigotry, that if the Reformation had not expunged Prayers for the Dead out of our Rule of Faith, I ſhould think myſelf obliged to pray them out of their Purgatory as often as I receive my Rents.

But my worthy Neighbour, ſetting aſide their religious Errors, are not we much obliged to thoſe that had ſo carefully ſecured thoſe Poſſeſſions

ſeſſions which had ſo lately been torn from the Church, and which, if the Reformation had not happily ſucceeded, might be taken from them and us without thoſe Abſolutions and Remiſſions obtained by them, of the See of *Rome?* So careful were thoſe wiſe and prudent Anceſtors of ours in ſecuring their Poſſeſſions, that they procured the following Year a confirmation of what Cardinal *Pool* had tranſacted in conſequence of the Power veſted in him by *Julius* III.

This confirmation was had of Pope *Paul* IV. who, tho' upon no good Terms with *Spain*, would not however heſitate approving of what his Predeceſſor had done as warranted by the Canons, notwithſtanding his Enmity to *Philip* the Conſort of our Queen, and even to Cardinal *Pool*, whoſe Act he thus confirmed. As I have been led imperceptibly into Antiquity, I beg Leave to preſent you with this ſubſequent Act of Security from the See of *Rome*, which I inſert at large for your better underſtanding the Stile of a court dignified by Papiſts with the vain Epithet of Infallible.---This Bull was obtained upon a Petition of Sir *William Petre* (the Anceſtor in a direct Succeſſion of the preſent Lord *Petre*, ſtill remaining a popiſh Family) who, perhaps being naturally more ſcrupulous than any other of his communion in the Kingdom, at that Time, was willing that the late Act of the Legat *Pool* might be confirmed by the Pope perſonally. The caution was certainly needleſs, it being a Maxim in Law, that the Act of the Attorney is that of the principle to all Intents and Purpoſes; and ſuch was the Opinion of all the poſſeſſors of Church-

lands

lands then in the Kingdom, except Sir *William Petre*, who may have dipt too deeply into that *Over-righteouſneſs*, which Dr. *Trapp* ſo juſtly condemns in our modern *Methodiſts*.

" *Paul*, Biſhop, Servant of the Servants of " God, to the perpetual Memory of the Fact. " By the accuſtomed Bounty of the apoſtolick " See, it becomes us freely to impart apoſtolick " Favour to thoſe who require Quiet and Tran- " quillity, eſpecially when it is humbly deſired " from us, and reaſonable cauſes perſuade to it, " and that they may remain undiſturbed to add " the ſtability of apoſtolick Sanction.

" A Petition being lately exhibited to us on " the part of our beloved Son the noble Sir *Wil-* " *liam Petre*, Knt. and counſellor of the King, " of the Dioceſe of *Exeter*, that heretofore King " *Henry* VIII. of famous Memory, and ſeveral " other perſons, (there particularly named) ſold " to the ſaid Sir *William Petre*, Manors, Lord- " ſhips, Advowſons, Lands, *&c.* belonging to " the Monaſteries, (particularly alſo named) as " appeared by Inſtruments and publick Proofs.

" And afterwards our beloved Son, Deacon " of St. *Mary* in *Coſmedon*, called Cardinal *Pool*, " Legat *de Latere* in *England*, of us and the " aforeſaid See, being authorized to that Mat- " ter, with ſufficient Power, by Letters from the " ſaid See as appears in his commiſſion.

" And afterwards we generally, under cer- " tain Words expreſſed in Mode and Form,

" have

" have * *approved and confirmed the Sales, Gifts,*
" *and Exchanges, and Grants made to and by*
" *him, and added to them Strength of Aſſurance*
" *or Firmneſs, as in our Letter made thereupon*
" *is ſaid more fully to be contained.*

" However, as the ſaid Petition ſubjoined
" expreſſeth, the ſame Sir *William Petre*, who
" deſires to have all the Sales, Gifts, and Grants
" made to him of thoſe Things in the ſaid In-
" ſtruments and Documents continued, for the
" better caution ſpecially and expreſly to be ap-
" proved and confirmed: And beſides, hath
" humbly ſupplicated to us, that of our apo-
" ſtolical Benignity, we would vouchſafe to pro-
" vide for the Indemnity of him and his.

" Therefore we, who admit to the Favour of
" our Audience the Prayers of thoſe devoted to
" us and our foreſaid See, quit the ſaid *William*
" from all Excommunications, Suſpenſions, In-
" terdicts, and other Eccleſiaſtical Sentences,
" Cenſures and Puniſhments, either by Law or
" from any Man, upon any Occaſion or Cauſe
" produced, (if he be by any of them any ways
" tied in conſequence of any effect of theſe Pre-
" ſents only) by the Tenor of theſe Preſents ab-
" ſolving him, and judging him to be abſolved.

" Being

* This Approbation was general, and prior to this Bull to Sir *William Petre*, as may appear by theſe Words in the Journal of the Houſe of Commons, of the Parliament held the ſecond and third of *Philip* and *Mary*. *After which was read a Bull from the Pope's Holineſs, confirming the Doings of my Lord Cardinal* POOL, *touching the Aſſurance of Abby Lands, &c. after which the Speaker with the Commons departed to the other Houſe.*

" Being inclined by thoſe Supplications, by " Apoſtolical Authority, by theſe Preſents do " *perpetually* approve and confirm all the Sales, " Grants, and Gifts aforeſaid; likewiſe all the " Receipts and Procurements of the Poſſeſſions " and the retaining them; and as they concern " them all and each ſingular other Matters in all " the Inſtruments, Documents, and other Wri- " tings and Things contained in the *aforeſaid* " *Letters* of the ſaid *Riginald* the Cardinal; and " to them *do add the Strength of a perpetual* " *and inviolable Firmneſs, ſupplying all and ſin-* " *gular Defects of Law or Fact neceſſary to be* " *expreſſed, if by Chance any happen to inter-* " *vene in them*; and decreeing them inviolable " to be eſt abliſhed, *without any Scruple of Con-* " *ſcience*; as alſo by the ſaid *William Petre*, and " Biſhops, Chapters, Abbots, Priors, Prior- " eſſes and Convents, and others which theſe " any way concern, or *may concern for the fu-* " *ture*, according to the Tenor of the Sales, " Grants, and other Diſpoſitions made upon " them, in all things and by all Means *perpetu-* " *ally* to be obſerved; and ſo be judged, and " ought to be defined by all Judges Eccle- " ſiaſtical and Secular Commiſſaries, enjoying " any Authority, taking from them, and every " of them, every Faculty and Authority of " judging and interpreting otherwiſe, *and* " *making it void and null*, if upon the Premiſes, " by any one by any Authority, knowingly or " ignorantly it happened to be attempted.

" Wherefore, by Apoſtolick Writ, we com- " mand our venerable Brothers the Biſhops of " *London*, *Exeter* and *Piſauria*, that two or one

" of

" of them, or by any other or others; these
" Presents and whatever is contained in them,
" when and where there is need, and so often on
" the Part of *William Petre* and the Heirs afore-
" said or any of them, it be required, solemnly
" to publish, and assisting them in the Premises,
" with Maintainance of an effectual Defence, by
" our Authority they perform it, to make them
" and every one of them peaceably, not per-
" mitting any of them by the Bishops, Chap-
" ters, Abbots, Priors, Prioresses or Convents,
" or any other, contrary to the Tenor of these
" Presents in any ways to be molested, vexed
" or disturbed; inflicting upon all Contradictors
" and Rebels, by Ecclesiastical Censures, and
" Money-Mulcts, at their Pleasure; punish-
" ments to be applied, and by other opportune
" Remedies quieting them; postponing all
" Appeals, and by repeated Instances aggrava-
" ting, and, if need be, calling into this Pur-
" pose the Aid of the *Secular Arm*.

" Notwithstanding any heretofore sent Apo-
" stolick Constitutions and Ordinances of what
" kind soever, or by what other Firmness cor-
" roborated Statutes and Customs contrary there-
" to whatsoever; or if it be indulged from the
" said See, to Bishops, Abbots, Priors, Prior-
" esses, or by any other in common or sepa-
" rately, that they may not be interdicted, sus-
" pended, or excommunicated by Apostolical
" Letters, not making full and express men-
" tion Word by Word of the said Indulgence.

" Therefore it shall not be lawful for any Man
" whatsoever to infringe or contradict by any
" rash

" rash Attempt this Writing of ours, of Abso-
" lution, Approbation, Adjection, Supplement,
" and Command. If any therefore presume to
" attempt this, let him know, that he shall in-
" cur the Indignation of the omnipotent God,
" and of the holy Apostles, *Peter* and *Paul*.

" Dated at *Rome*, at St. *Peter*'s, the Year of
" the Incarnation of the Lord, 1555. the
" 4th of the Kalends of *December*, the first
" Year of our Pontificate, and 2. and 3.
" *Philip* and *Mary*."

Subsigned *BELTRADUS*.

But *England* is not the only Country where Church-Lands have been alienated by Consent of the Court of *Rome*, and to the intire Repose of the Consciences of the most abstemious among the Papists themselves. Innumerable Instances of the Kind are to be met in *Germany* and *France*, the State of *Venice*, and indeed in all the Popish Countries of *Europe*. The present House of *Bavaria*, enjoys the Estates of several Abbies and other Religious Houses; so does the House of *Palatine*; and it may be said, that there is scarce a Sovereign House in the Empire that holds not, by Dispensation from *Rome*, some Church-Lands, or other Ecclesiastical Revenue. Pope *Clement* IXth permitted, by Bull, the Alienation of the intire Estates of two Religious Congregations in the State of *Venice*, for defraying the Charge of the Defence of the Island of *Candia*: Two thirds of the over-grown Estate of the House of *Condé* in *France*, consist of Church-Lands confirmed to them by the See Apostolick

Apoſtolick. But what is more applicable to my preſent Purpoſe is, that in the laſt Century the Court of *Rome* conſented to the Diſſolution of ſeveral Religious Houſes in *Poland*, in order to ſupply the Exigency of the Crown then at War with the *Turk*.

And without drawing any invidious Parallels between the *Mahometan* Turk at War with the *Poles* in thoſe Days, and the *moſt Chriſtian* Turk at War with us at preſent, I believe it will be admitted that *England* ſtands in as much need as *Poland* ever did of Aid from the Church. In this Country we are taxed up to the Eyes, not knowing where to find any one Article, of abſolute Uſe or Conveniency, untaxed; they ſcarce knew in *Poland* what Taxes were. There, they were wholly unacquainted with National Debts; here they are almoſt beyond the Reach of Computation. The Intereſt only of our Debts riſes to almoſt double what was raiſed on the Nation, half a Century ago, for defraying the Civil Liſt and all the Publick Expences beſides. But above all, are we now in more imminent Danger from *France* than the *Poles* were from the *Ottoman Court*? What ſhall prevent the *Chriſtian* Turk from ſubjecting theſe Kingdoms to his Yoke, after he ſhall have ſtrengthened himſelf with the Naval Force of *Holland*? And how, but by great and uncommon Efforts on our Side, ſhall he be obſtructed in his Views upon the *Dutch*?

I won't ſuppoſe the *Poliſh* Clergy warmer Patriots, more diſintereſted or more zealous Chriſtians

ſtians than ours of the eſtabliſhed Church. The high Regard I bear the latter won't permit me to entertain the leaſt Scruple on this Head. Why then ſhould we doubt of the Alacrity of our Churchmen to co-operate with the Laity towards averting the beg Dangers that threaten their Country? Nor are theſe Dangers ſo diſtant but that they threaten even the Church itſelf, in ſo much that it is become the Intereſt of the Clergy to part with ſome in order to preſerve the whole.

I am too zealous a Churchman to wiſh that the Paſtors of the Church might not be able to live decently and comfortably, tho' I am an utter Enemy to ſpiritual Luxury. I think the Clergy in *Holland* and *Scotland* enjoy ſuch a *Competency* as becomes the Function; and as our Church is Epiſcopal, I am for a ſuitable Proviſion for Biſhops, but ſtill with an Eye to *Competency*, ſo eligible at all Times, but of ſuch abſolute Neceſſity at preſent.

As I am never better pleaſed than when I find Subject for Encomium among my own Countrymen, I confeſs it has often given me refined Pleaſure to find Cardinal *Pool*, tho' a Papiſt, to have been ſo excellent a perſonage as he is painted by all his cotemporary Writers. And if I had never ſeen any other Teſt of his Virtues but that of his Exhortation to the Parliament, to make commodious proviſion for the Paſtors of the Church, it would be a Confirmation to me of the Warmth of his Piety and Depth of his Underſtanding. He exhorts, " that in Churches now in being it may " be ſo provided for them that have the care of " Souls, that their Paſtors, Parſons, and Vicars " may *commodiouſly, and honeſtly according to their*

" *Quality and State, he maintained, whereby they* " *may laudably exerciſe the Cure of Souls*, and ſup- " port the incumbent Burthens."—— This Exhortation is included in his Abſolution and Diſpenſation concerning Schiſm and Church-lands, and dated at *Lambeth* 9th of the Kalends of *January*, the 5th of Pope *Julius* III.

It is obſervable that the Cardinal, who, we may preſume, was not unacquainted with the Conſtitutions of Churchmen, required only *commodious and honeſt Maintenance* for the Paſtors of the Church. He requires not *golden* Prebendaries, Pluralities or Commendams for the ſpiritual Overſeers of *Chriſt*'s Flock. *Commodious and honeſt Maintenance* for our Shepherds was all the good Cardinal deſired, who, knowing from the Depravity of human Nature, that too great Affluence often corrupts the Morals, and debilitates and incapacitates the Body for Labour and Exerciſe.

Whence, but from the too great Affluence of our Church Dignitaries, always productive of Sloth, perhaps of Ignorance, has that Tide of *Infidelity* flowed, which is ſaid to have overſpread the Land within a few Years paſt? Man will grow wanton with Plenty; and too often, I fear, he will forget his divine Benefactor when he can enjoy not only the Conveniencies but Superfluities of Life without Pains or Labour.

I repeat it again, that we have ſome good Churchmen among us; but have we a Number of learned pains-taking, humble, modeſt, ſober Clergymen ſufficient to bear down, by Precept and Example, the formidable *Phalanx* of *Freethinkers* that have ſprung up, I fear by the Indolence

Indolence of our Guides, within our Memories?

If then the *Infidelity* of our countrymen be imputable to the too great Affluence of our Clergy, 'tis fit for that Reason, if there were no other, that the latter were remedied. For without taking away the cause it can't be expected the Effect will cease. Set the Clergy more on an Equality; let them be but *commodiously and honestly provided for*, according to Cardinal *Pool*, and then we may expect they would employ their whole Time in battering down the high Ramparts of Infidelity, lately grown much more formidable and dangerous than even Popery.

As I propose the whole Body of pastors should be paid by the Crown, they might employ that Time in the Vineyard, which is now laid out in collecting Rents, Tithes, and other Dues, and often in plaguing their dissenting parishioners and others with frivolous and uncharitable Law-Suits. My Method would cut off at once all Solicitation at court and all Attendance at Levies, and Translations would be scarce known among our Prelates, who thereby would be amply at Leisure to combat all that Groupe of modern Errors that have crept upon us of latter Days.

But as great as my concern is for the Souls of my countrymen, I cannot help having an Eye still to their worldly Interest. Aid is wanting, and where shall we seek it but of the Church, that tender Mother always ready to bestow and indulge? The Laity are overburthened, and on whom shall they cast part of their Load but on the Clergy, *who seek not their own profit, but the*

things

Things of Jesus Christ? These were the divine Words of a Popish Clergy; and shall we not think them as applicable to a reformed Clergy?

There is not a Popish State in *Europe* but has been aided, in times of Difficulty and Expence, by the Body of its Clergy. In *Spain*, the Pope has granted Bulls for levying the *Tenth* on the Clergy, since the breaking out of the present War, and often before occasionally. In *France* the clergy make the crown an annual *Free Gift* of very great Value. But the *French* court goes further when put to Necessities, as you may perceive by the following Extract of a Letter, *Anno* 1563, from the Queen Regent of *France*, Mother of *Charles* IXth, to Pope *Pius* IVth, and the general council then convened at *Trent*.

* "That after consultaion had been had how "to pay the Debt of the crown, a Decree had "passed for alienating to the Value of a hundred "thousand crowns of Ecclesiastical immoveable "Goods, and it was confirmed by the King's "Edict and Sentance of the Parliament."—My Author goes on with the Instructions sent to the Ambassador of *France* who was to have delivered the aforesaid Letter. "The *French* Ambassa-"dor was ordered to move his Holiness to give "his consent, alledging the Exhausture of the "Exchequer by the late War, that the King de-"signed to put his Affairs in order that he might "begin, as his purpose ever was since the "making of the Peace, to reunite all the King-"dom to the catholick Religion; and that he "might be abler to force whosoever should op-"pose him, he meant to impose a Subsidy, and "caus

* *Pietro, Soavo Palano's* History of the Council of *Trent*.

" cause the clergy to contribute their parts to it
" also, whereto the Church was so much more
" bound than others, by howmuch their Interests
" were more in Question. That all being con-
" sidered, nothing was found to be more easy
" than to supply the Necessity with the Aliena-
" tion of some few Ecclesiastical Revenues,
" whereto he desired the consent of his Holiness."

The Pope, perhaps more tenacious of the things of this World than he ought, and too like many of his cloth here among us, quibbled with the *French* court for the present, hoping by Delay to avert the Storm. But the *French* Ministers, tho' papists and owning the Supremacy, went on with the Seizure and Sale of the Church-Lands without Scruple or waiting for his Holiness's Bulls. Yet as many were scrupulous to purchase without the consent of the court of *Rome*, the Sale went on heavily.—— But as I have all along taken the Liberty to entertain you with Scraps of Antiquity, permit me to pursue this Subject from the same Author. I do it the rather that it will furnish you with clearer Ideas of the policy of the court of *Rome*, and of the high Regard paid to its Bulls and Decrees, by all that are of the *Romish* persuasion.

" The Pope, says the Author (Page 667.) an-
" swered, that the Demand was painted forth with
" a fair pretence of defending the Church, but it
" was the only way to ruin it; for the avoiding
" whereof, his surest was not to consent to it;
" and he was of Opinion, that the *French* would
" not proceed to the Execution of it without
" him, and he thought without his consent none
" would adventure Money upon them, because
" a time might come that the Ecclesiasticks

" *would*

" *would resume their Rents and not restore the* " *Price:* And he proposed the Business to the " Consistory and resolved not to consent, but " by divers Excuses to shew it was impossible to " obtain that Demand at his Hands."

You will easily distinguish in this Answer the Subtilty of the Court of *Rome* on one Hand, and on the other, its Reliance on the Implicitenes of the Veneration in which its Decrees are held by Papists. --- The Pope refuses or rather delays his consent, *being of Opinion the* French *would not proceed to Execution without him*; and believing, *that no Purchaser would hazard his Money without his Consent.* And he does not stop here neither, but gives the Reason why the Purchaser could not think it safe to part with his Money without his consent. *Because a time might come that the Ecclesiasticks might resume their Lands and not return the Purchase Money.*

Hence arise various Speculations in regard to Church-Lands, well worth the Attention of all Papists that are in Possession of such Estates. In the first Place, 'tis evident that the Bishop of *Rome* claims a Right to dispense with the Alienation of the Possessions of the Church, which has never been disputed with him, but on the contrary allowed by the general consent of those in communion with that See; and in the next, *that without the Dispensation of the Pope, Ecclesiasticks may resume their Possessions without returning the Purchase Money.*

The more attentively I reflect on these considerations, the more I admire the wise circumspection of our Ancestors, in the Reign of Queen

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Mary, for having fought with ſo great Earneſtneſs the conſent or Bull of Diſpenſation of the Court of *Rome*, for their purchaſe of thoſe Lands that had been taken from the Church in the preceding Reigns. With us Proteſtants, an Act of Parliament would anſwer every Purpoſe of Security we could propoſe to ourſelves; but to a Nation of papiſts, as the whole People then were, and propoſed to remain ſuch, it was thought neceſſary to procure the further Security of a Diſpenſation from the See of *Rome*, without which it might be poſſible for Eccleſiaſticks, in the Reign of ſome future Church-ridden Prince to reſume their Poſſeſſions without refunding the Purchaſe Money. But by obtaining the conſent of *Julius* III. by his Legat, Cardinal *Pool*, and the confirmation of *Paul* IV. by his Bull in Favour of Sir *William Petre*, wherein he expreſly confirms what had been done by *Pool*, our Anceſtors ſhut out irreverſibly all future Claimants to their Poſſeſſion of Church-Lands.

The Act of Parliament, it is true, was in itſelf an ample Security, becauſe it could not be preſumed that a Court, however influenced by Churchmen or ſkilled in the iniquitous Myſtery of Corruption, could prevail on a Majority of *Engliſh* Legiſlators, at all times no leſs tenacious of their *Intereſts* than Liberties, to repeal a Law which confirmed to them and their Friends and Relations, the Poſſeſſion of at leaſt one third of the Lands of the Kingdom. But our cautious Fathers, willing to guard againſt the moſt diſtant Dangers, ſecured the Poſſeſſion of their Church and Abbey-Lands for ever againſt thoſe who alone could have any colour of Right to diſpute their Titles.

As

As for Temporal Security, or that of the *Legislature*, it was obtain'd in the ampleſt Manner poſſible, as may be ſeen by the Act at large, and particularly by that clauſe of it, which ſubjects Aggreſſors to the Penalties incur'd by being guilty of a *Præmunire*: The cautious clauſe is as follows.

" And that it may be in like manner Enacted, " by the Authority aforeſaid, that whoſoever " ſhall by any Proceſs, obtained out of any *Ec-* " *cleſiaſtical Court*, within this Realm, *or with-* " *out, or by Pretence of any Spiritual Juriſdiction* " *or otherwiſe, contrary to the Laws of this* " *Realm*, inquiet or moleſt any Perſon or Per- " ſons, or Body Politick, for any Manors, " Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, or things " above ſpecified, contrary to the Words, Sen- " tences, and Meaning of this Act; ſhall incur " the Danger of the Act of *Præmunire*, made " the 16th Year of King *Richard* II. and ſhall " ſuffer and incur the Forfeitures and Pains con- " tinued in the ſame."

The Spiritual Security muſt neceſſarily come from the Clergy, as being thoſe only who could poſſibly aſſert any ſuch Right. But as they, by their Vows and the Conſtitution of their Church, are to pay implicite Obedience to the Court of *Rome*, our Anceſtors took care, by obtaining the aforeſaid *Diſpenſations*, to ſeclude them for ever from even an Aſſertion of any ſuch pretended Right. And to carry their Precautions all the Lengths that could poſſibly be ſuggeſted by the moſt conſummate Prudence, our Forefathers ordered Matters ſo as that the Clergy themſelves ſhould not only *releaſe* all Rights or Privileges

Claims they might have, but be *Petitioners* for that *Bull* or *Diſpenſation* from the See of *Rome*, which took away every Shadow of Right which either they or their Succeſſors could claim to the Poſſeſſions, confirmed to the Laity by ſuch Bulls and the Act of Parliament. In ſo much that if we had continued Papiſts to this Hour, we ſhould not have the leaſt room for apprehending a Reſumption of Church-Lands. On the contrary, the Point would be ſo much the clearer and more favourable on the Side of the preſent Poſſeſſors, that by the Conſtitutions of Papiſts, ſuch of the Clergy as ſhould dare attempt aſſerting any ſuch pretended Right, in Contravention to the aforeſaid *Bulls*, would be ſeverely puniſhed and loaded with all the Inconveniencies attending the *Excommunicatio Major*.

But that the Wiſdom of our Anceſtors, their great Exactneſs, and prudential Care for Poſterity may appear the more conſpicuouſly, and for a Leſſon to thoſe who dole away our Millions unattentive to the Conſequences, I will produce the powers by Vertue of which Cardinal *Pool* granted his Diſpenſation to the poſſeſſors of Abbey-Lands. The pope's firſt Brief to the Cardinal was dated the 8th of *March*, 1554, and was as follows, which, for your Eaſe, I give you in *Engliſh*, and for my own, as I have all my other Quotations, in that *old Engliſh*, which I find ready prepared to my Hand by ancient Writers of beſt Repute and Authority.

"Altho' we have impowered thee with many, " and thoſe moſt ample Faculties by divers of " our Letters, as well made under *Led* as in the " Form of Briefs, which, while thou reſideſt " in *Flanders*, thou mayeſt uſe, as well to the " perſons as Affairs of *England*, as it is more

 fully

" fully contained in them. But by Reaſon of
" the Schiſms and other Errors with which the
" ſaid Kingdom hath been long infected, many
" Caſes may happen which may need proviſi-
" ons to be made by the ſaid See, and being,
" as it were, infinite and not to be before thought
" of, cannot be comprehended under the ſaid
" Faculties, and likewiſe it is doubted by ſome,
" *whether thou be impowered* by the ſame Facul-
" ties, *&c.* We in the Lord well confiding in thy
" Faith, Piety, Religion, Learning and Pru-
" dence, *and willing to cut off all Cauſe of doubt-*
" *ing in the Premiſes* to thy Circumſpection
" wherever thou art, *&c.* during this thy Le-
" gation, *give thee Power to uſe by thyſelf, or any*
" *other*, according to the Contents and Tenor
" of the ſaid Faculties, all and ſingular the ſame
" already granted to thee, or to be granted to
" thee, for the perſons and affairs of the King-
" dom, and the Iſles and Dominions of the
" ſame, and to *pronounce, do, execute, and pro-*
" *ſecute, all and ſingular things* which, for the
" Honour of Almighty God and ours and the
" ſaid See, as alſo for the Reduction of the ſaid
" Kingdom, Iſles, and Dominions to the Com-
" munion of the holy Church, and the Health
" of the Soul of the perſons living in the ſame,
" *thou ſhalt think expedient, altho' they fall not*
" *within the general Command and Faculties other-*
" *wiſe granted to thee, but require ſpecial Expreſſion*
" *and Command, and by Apoſtolical Authority, by*
" *the Tenure of theſe Preſents, we grant and in-*
" *dulge, and extend to all theſe the foreſaid Faculties*
" *granted to thee*, &c.

This Brief may be ſuppoſed to have been granted to quiet the Minds of the Scrupulous in regard to the Ampleneſs of the powers deligated to

to Cardinal *Pool* by thoſe prior *Faculties* mentioned therein: And yet ſo far did our Fathers carry their Precaution, that even this Brief, tho' as ample and general as poſſible, did not, it ſeems, give intire Content to the over-righteous of thoſe Days. But to quiet for ever the Minds of the Poſſeſſors of *Church-Lands*, and to cut away all Hopes from the Clergy of reſuming the Poſſeſſions lately taken from them, the following Brief was ſent to the Legate dated the 28th of *June*, 1554.

" Whereas in the late Months by-paſt, Hope " was given us by God's Mercy, and the great " Religion and Piety of our deareſt Daughter in " Chriſt, *Mary*, Queen of *England*, which very " long by the Impiety of ſome was torn from " the Body of the reſt of the Catholick Church, " would be reduced to the Union of the ſaid Ca- " tholick and univerſal Church, without which " Salvation can be to none; therefore we deſtine " thee to the ſaid Queen *Mary*, and *all that* " *Kingdom*, as Legate *à Latere* of us and the " Apoſtolick See, as an Angel of Peace and " Concord, by the Council and unanimous Af- " ſent of our venerable Brethren the Cardinals " of the holy *Roman* Church; and have impow- " ered thee with all the Faculties which we have " thought neceſſary to the effecting ſo great a " Buſineſs, or are any way ſeaſonable for it; *and* " *among other Things have given thee Authority* " *and Faculty to thy Circumſpection, to accord,* " *and tranſact with the Poſſeſſors of Eccleſiaſtical** " *Goods*; concerning all the *Fruits* unjuſtly re- " ceived, and the *moveable* Goods waſted, and " them *to free and acquit*, when it can be done,

* *Bona*, in the Canon Law implies as well *immovables* as moveables.

" as in our Letters thereupon made, is more
" fully contained.

" Whereas for theſe Beginnings, which by
" the Induſtry and Diligence, and Right and
" conſtant Mind to God of the ſaid *Mary*, and
" in that Matter by thy co-operating Study and
" Counſel, the foreſaid Work of Reduction in
" the ſaid Kingdom to this Day hath, and the
" Perfection of the ſaid famous Work is daily
" more to be hoped; and the Matter may be
" known, thereby to have more eaſy Progreſs,
" ſo much the more as we ſhew Hope of Apo-
" ſtolical Benignity and Indulgence, *in the Poſ-*
" *ſeſſions of Eccleſiaſtical Goods occupied by the*
" *Men in that Kingdom, in the Confuſion of the*
" *late Times.* We not only willingly for any
" earthly Reſpect *to hinder ſuch a Recovery of a*
" Nation, the moſt beloved of us in Chriſt, af-
" ter the Cuſtom of an holy Father towards Sons
" of us and the holy Catholick Church, after a
" long time of dangerous travel Abroad, meet-
" ing them that look back and return with a
" wiſhed Embrace: In whoſe excellent Virtue,
" ſingular Piety, Learning, Wiſdom, and Dex-
" terity, we having in the Lord full truſt, at
" thy own *Arbitrement by our Authority*, give
" thee full Power of treating, agreeing, tranſ-
" acting, and compounding with whatever
" *Poſſeſſors or Detainers of Eccleſiaſtical Goods, as*
" *well moveable as immoveable in the ſaid King-*
" *dom*; for whom the ſaid moſt ſerene Queen
" *Mary* ſhall intercede, *and give thee full Power*
" *and Authority by the Tenor of theſe Preſents, and*
" *of certain Knowledge to diſpenſe with them, that*
" *they may retain the ſaid Goods without any Scru-*
" *ple for the Future*, and of concluding and do-
" ing all and ſingular other things, which in
" theſe are any ways neceſſary and ſeaſonable,
" *&c.*"

This

This Brief, as none could be apter or ampler, gave ſuch univerſal Satisfaction, that, after the Cardinal had confirmed the Poſſeſſion of Church-Lands to the Laity, there was not a Scruple or Doubt throughout the whole Nation concerning the Legality of their Title to theſe Poſſeſſions: And it would be the ſame to this Time, had we continued our Obedience to the See of *Rome*; it being a Fundamental with Papiſts, to be ſtrictly obſervant of the Decretals of that awful Tribunal.

There are many and various Inſtances wherein Papiſts had acknowledged the diſpenſing Power of the Biſhops of *Rome* in regard to the Alienation of the Church-Lands, and their acquieſcing implicitly with the Tenor of their Bulls, long before the Reformation. All the Countries in *Europe* abound with ſuch Inſtances, and our own particularly. But not to overburthen you with Quotations, I ſhall mention but a few. Pope *Clement* V. by his Bull or Brief of the 10th of the Kalends of *December*, 1307, Ordered the ſeizing the *Knights Templars* here, in one Night (according to the Example of the *French* King who had obtained the like Brief) and gave the Cuſtody of their Lands and Goods to King *Edward* II.

Pope *Clement* VII. granted his Brief to Cardinal *Wolſey*, the 4th of the Nones of *November*, 1528, for diſſolving and ſuppreſſing ſuch Monaſteries as maintained but ſix or three Monks, to the value of 8000 Ducats of Gold of yearly Rent, *&c.* And as in this Brief or Bull are the fulleſt Recitals of the Pope's diſpenſing Power in regard to the Alienation of Church Poſſeſſions, I would quote it in the Original, if I had not already made too free with your Patience. But ſhould your Curioſity prompt you, it may be eaſily ſatisfied by Doctor *Fiddes*, or *Rhymer*. By another

another Brief in the ſame Year, dated the Day before the Kalends of *June*, and directed to *Wolſey*, he was authorized to ſuppreſs ſeveral religious Houſes, for the building and endowing of *Chriſt-Church* College in *Oxford*. And likewiſe a Brief the following Year, from the ſame Pope, of the Nones of *February*, for a Diſſolution of religious Houſes, and applying their ſeveral Revenues to the endowing the Cardinal's College at *Ipſwich*, where he was born.

But not to dwell on this Part of my Subject, which you will have obſerved to be introduced to ſhew you, that ſince the more tenacious Popiſh Clergy have voluntarily releaſed, for ever, vaſt Poſſeſſions for the Eaſe and Tranquility of the State, and that the Laity poſſeſſed thoſe Lands without Scruple or Remorſe, we are not to ſuppoſe, that our preſent Clergy will prove more lukewarm Patriots, or that our Laity will prove more ſcrupulous Buyers. I hope one may ſafely anſwer for the *Self-denial* of our Churchmen in a Juncture ſo extremely Critical as the Preſent, but I will take upon me to anſwer for the Laity, that they will moſt willingly purchaſe all the Lands, Tithes and Dues now poſſeſſed by the Church, whenever they come to Market, and not perhaps ſo much for the Lucre of a gainful Bargain, as to get fairly rid of a Generation that are look'd upon by very many, to have fought more the *Things of this World*, than thoſe *Things of Jeſus Chriſt*, for the obtaining of which, their *Romiſh* Predeceſſors, under *Philip* and *Mary*, had ſpontaneouſly releaſed all Claim to thoſe *Things of this World* that had been taken from them.

But, Sir, before I take leave of You, permit me to make an Obſervation which ariſes from the Subject I have been treating of. I have ſhewn,

ſhewn, that if we had continued Papiſts, the Diſpenſations of *Rome* would have intirely quieted our Conſciences as to our Poſſeſſion of Church-Lands, and our Minds, as to any Claim the Clergy might vainly ſet up hereafter to ſuch Poſſeſſions: And I have endeavour'd to ſhew likewiſe the moral Impoſſibility of an *Engliſh* Legiſlature's repealing that ſolemn Act paſſed the ſecond of *Philip* and *Mary*, to confirm the Rights of thoſe Poſſeſſors ſo diſpenſed with by the Court of *Rome*.

We ſhould have found all theſe Precautions neceſſary if we had remained in Communion with the See of *Rome*; and ſhould our preſent *Infidelity* ever throw us back into that miſterious Communion, which many good Proteſtants apprehend may one Day be the Conſequence of the preſent Depravity of both Paſtors and Flock, we ſhall find theſe wiſe Precautions of our Fathers ſo many impenetrable Bulwarks, behind which our Poſſeſſion of *Church-Lands* reſts as firm and ſecure as the Throne itſelf; as in *Saxony*, where, tho' the Prince and his family be *Papiſts*, his *Proteſtant* Subjects are, and think themſelves for ever, ſecure in the Poſſeſſion of their *Church-Lands*.

The Proteſtant Poſſeſſors likewiſe of Church-Lands in the *Palatinate*, the Dutchies of *Wirtemberg*, *Baden*, and ſeveral other States of *Germany*, are no leſs ſecure in their Poſſeſſion of ſuch Lands, tho' their reſpective Sovereigns be returned to the *Roman* Communion. All are tranquil, all are ſafe and ſecure in the Empire with regard to Church-Lands, nor is there any the leaſt colourable Pretext for our being otherwiſe here in *England*, even tho' our Sovereigns, like ſome in *Germany*, ſhould ſwerve from the Orthodoxy of the Reformation.

And

And, Sir, the Obſervation I would make before I conclude, is this, that as we have the Pleaſure to find and think our Poſſeſſion of *Church-Lands* to be ſecure at all Events, under any King, and of what Religion ſoever he may be, ſo have we likewiſe the Satisfaction to look upon our Properties in the *Funds* to be equally ſolid and ſecure. I admit that Corruption has taken deep and dangerous Root among us of late Years. But, Sir, as it was ſeldom known that a Man would be corrupted to his own undoing, nay to the undoing of his Friends, Relations, in ſhort, of all that he holds dear; how can we ſuppoſe that an *Engliſh* Legiſlature will or can be corrupted to wipe of any of our Property in the Funds with a Parliamentary Spunge; and ſure I am that no Prince, ever ſo little verſed in our Annals and acquainted with our Tempers, will venture to leſſen that Property without Conſent of Parliament?

As I take ſuch a Violation to be morally impoſſible, I ſhould be extremely eaſy as to the Diſpoſition and Religion of our future Rulers, even if the Proſpect before us had been leſs flattering than it is. The Royal Progeny in View, promiſe all the good we can hope for; but my Comfort ſhall be always this, that let who will be King, the People will have the Power, and I am ſure, they never can want the *Will*, to ſecure their Properties in the *Funds* and *Church-Lands*.

I am too well acquainted, Sir, with the Purity of yo r Patriotiſm to doubt of your Pardon for addreſſing to you ſuch Reaſons as occur'd to me in Defence of my Propoſal for weakening the Church, or rather the *Clergy*, in order to ſtrengthen the drooping, o'er-burthen'd *State*.

I am, &c.